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ABSTRACT

Figurative language enlivens a text, providing visuals in the minds of readers. This lesson will have students listening to and reading selected texts as they seek out their favorite literary devices. During the five to seven 50-minute sessions, grade three through five students will: acquire a clear understanding of the concept of figurative language devices of simile, metaphor, and personification. The instructional plan, lists of resources, student assessment/reflection activities, and a list of National Council of Teachers of English/International Reading Association (NCTE/IRA) Standards addressed in the lesson are included. Blank bookmarks for students to record locations of similes, metaphors, and personification as they read; brief definitions of 10 types of figurative language; a list of 22 suggested books; and a trophy form are attached. (RS)

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Figurative Language Awards Ceremony

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ED 480 220

Grade Band

3-5

Estimated Lesson Time

Five to seven 50-minute sessions

Overview

In this lesson students will use their background knowledge of figurative language. They will listen to texts read aloud to them, as well as explore texts to find their favorite examples of similes, metaphors, and personification. The students will nominate their terms, vote on them, and write an acceptance speech incorporating figurative language of their own.

From Theory to Practice

Classroom libraries offer a variety of literature to young readers and writers, but the reading experience itself can be enriched when students understand the many literary devices that authors use in their writing. Susan Hall further explains this: "Specifically, picture storybooks can effectively illustrate many of the common literary elements found in "mature" literature. Deceptively simple, picture storybooks have the advantage of teaching complex literary devices in an accessible format to students of all ages. Flashback, inference, and rich imagery occur in the art and text of the picture storybooks as readily as in the play, the novel, or the short story."

Hall, Susan. 1994. *Using Picture Storybooks to Teach Literary Devices*. Westport, CT: Oryx Press.

Student Objectives

Students will

- acquire a clear understanding of the concept of the figurative language devices of simile, metaphor, and personification.
- be able to recognize examples and demonstrate use of the three devices in their own writing.

Resources

- Figurative Language Awards Bookmark
- Figurative Language Definitions
- Books Containing Figurative Language
- Trophy Form

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Instructional Plan

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Materials

- Books that contain examples of the three target literary devices
- Figurative Language Awards Bookmark
- Chart paper or word processor with projection device

Background

Students will need a working knowledge of figurative language, especially similes, metaphors, and personification. You can refer to the handout on figurative language for definitions. The students will be using their knowledge of literary devices to host an "awards ceremony" for the best use of figurative language. Before this activity, you may want to use these related ReadWriteThink lessons on figurative language:

Alliteration in Headline Poems

Avalanche, Aztek, or Bravada? A Connotation Mini-Lesson

Vocabulary Terms

- figurative language
- simile
- metaphor
- personification

Introduction

1. Provide the students with the list of selected books. Give them an opportunity to read several of the books. Point out that these books are all known for their figurative language. Tell the students that when they've finished reading, they will be having an "Academy Awards" of Figurative Language. The students will be compiling a list of examples of literary devices to nominate at the "awards ceremony."

2. After independently exploring the books, the teacher could choose several of the books to read aloud to the class. This provides a chance for some direct teaching as well as class discussion.

3. Divide the students into three equal groups. Assign the group to a literary device—simile, metaphor, personification. The groups should have access to books that illustrate their assigned literary device. Set a time limit (1-2 class periods) for the students to search the books for the best examples of their assigned piece of figurative language. By the end of the session, the students should have a list of their top 5 examples, which they can record on a Figurative Language Awards Bookmark.

4. The day of the awards ceremony, the "host" will welcome the class to the festivities and ask for nominations for the category of "Favorite Simile." Students will volunteer their selections and the teacher will write them onto the chart paper or type them into a word processor, with the computer hooked to a projection device.

5. After all nominations are in, the entire class will cast votes, and the "Best Use of Simile" trophy will be awarded. (This Trophy Form can be placed beside the winning example. Note that students can click on the upper and/or lower part of the trophy to type details such as the trophy name, the year/date it was awarded, who awarded it, and so forth.)

6. The same procedure is then followed for "Best Use of Metaphor" and "Best Use of Personification."

Concluding Activity

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Students are divided into their original groups and asked to compose an "Acceptance Speech" for the "Figurative Language Award." Tell them to use as many of their literary devices (simile, metaphor, personification) as they can in their speech. Speeches will be evaluated with regard to how many examples of figurative language they contain. One member from each group is asked to present the "speech" to the crowd.

EXAMPLE:
"Winning the award for the best simile is like a dream come true. We are as happy as clams to accept this award. This award is as good as gold. Thank you!"

Web Resource

Eduscapes Figurative Language
http://eduscapes.com/42explore/figlang.htm
When you're learning something new, it's nice to have more than one resource to explore. This web project provides "four to explore" for each topic. On each page you'll find definitions, activities, four good starting points, and many more links and resources for the thematic topic.

Extensions

- The students could work with a Fine Arts teacher to perform some of the literary devices or to act out the awards ceremony.
- Song lyrics can be used to teach literary devices. First, teach the term, and then use songs to identify the literary devices. Together, read the lyrics, listen to the song, and then locate the literary device. Here is a list of songs that can be used:

"The River" by Garth Brooks (Similes and Metaphors)
"Higher" by Creed (Alliteration and Assonance)
"Legend of Woolly Swamp" by Charlie Daniels (Personification and Onomatopoeia)
"Loving Arms" by Dixie Chicks (Imagery)
"Just the Two of Us" by Will Smith (Oxymoron and Hyperbole)
"Ironic" by Alanis Morissette (Irony)
"I'll Be" by Edwin McCain (General Intro to Poetry)

Student Assessment/Reflections

Kidwatching is a good technique to evaluate student engagement in the lesson. Look especially for:

- preparation of a nomination for each award category
- participation in class discussion
- involvement in group "Speech" activity

NCTE/IRA Standards

1 - Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

2 - Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an

understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

3 - Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

4 - Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

5 - Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

6 - Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.

11 - Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

12 - Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

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Figurative Language Awards Bookmark

Name: _____

Title: _____

List the page number and a brief reminder of the figurative language you find as you read.

Simile

p. _____

p. _____

p. _____

p. _____

Metaphor

p. _____

p. _____

p. _____

p. _____

Personification

p. _____

p. _____

p. _____

p. _____

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p. _____

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FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Alliteration: Repeated consonant sounds at the beginning of words.
"Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers."

Assonance: Repeated vowel sounds.
"The cat sat on the mat."

Onomatopoeia: Words whose sound suggests its meaning.
"The bees buzzed."

Imagery: Creating pictures for the senses (through, e.g., similes or metaphors).
"Fear was his constant companion."

Metaphor: A figure of speech stating two things are similar.
"The book was a passport to adventure."

Simile: A comparison using 'like' or 'as.'
"She floated in like a cloud."

Hyperbole: An extravagant exaggeration.
"My backpack weighs a ton!"

Personification: Giving human qualities to ideas and things.
"Her stomach growled."

Allusion: A reference to a specific person, place, or thing.
"She is as pretty as the Mona Lisa."

Symbol: Representation of something complex, general, or abstract.
"The Statue of Liberty symbolizes the democratic ideal."

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Suggested Books with Figurative Language

EXAMPLE BOOKS WITH SIMILES
Chanticleer and the Fox Geoffrey Chaucer
The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses Paul Gobel
Little Island Golden MacDonald
Hide and Seek Frog Alvin Tresselt
White Snow, Bright Snow Alvin Tresselt
Nettie's Trip South Ann Turner
Everyone Knows What a Dragon Looks Like Jay William
Umbrella Taro Yashima
Owl Moon Jane Yolen

EXAMPLE BOOKS WITH METAPHORS
Through the Mickle Woods Valiska Gregory
Kinda Blue Ann Grifalconi
Little Island Golden MacDonald
The Tale of Peter Rabbit Beatrix Potter
Tar Beach Faith Ringgold
Hide and Seek Frog Alvin Tresselt
White Snow, Bright Snow Alvin Tresselt
Owl Moon Jane Yolen

EXAMPLE BOOKS WITH PERSONIFICATION
The Little House Virginia Lee Burton
Gilberto and the Wind Marie Hall Ets
Flossie and the Fox Patricia McKissack
The Giving Tree Shel Silverstein
Sylvester and the Magic Pebble William Steig

Book titles taken from *Using Picture Storybooks to Teach Literary Devices*, Hall, Susan • 1994 Westport, CT: Oryx Press.

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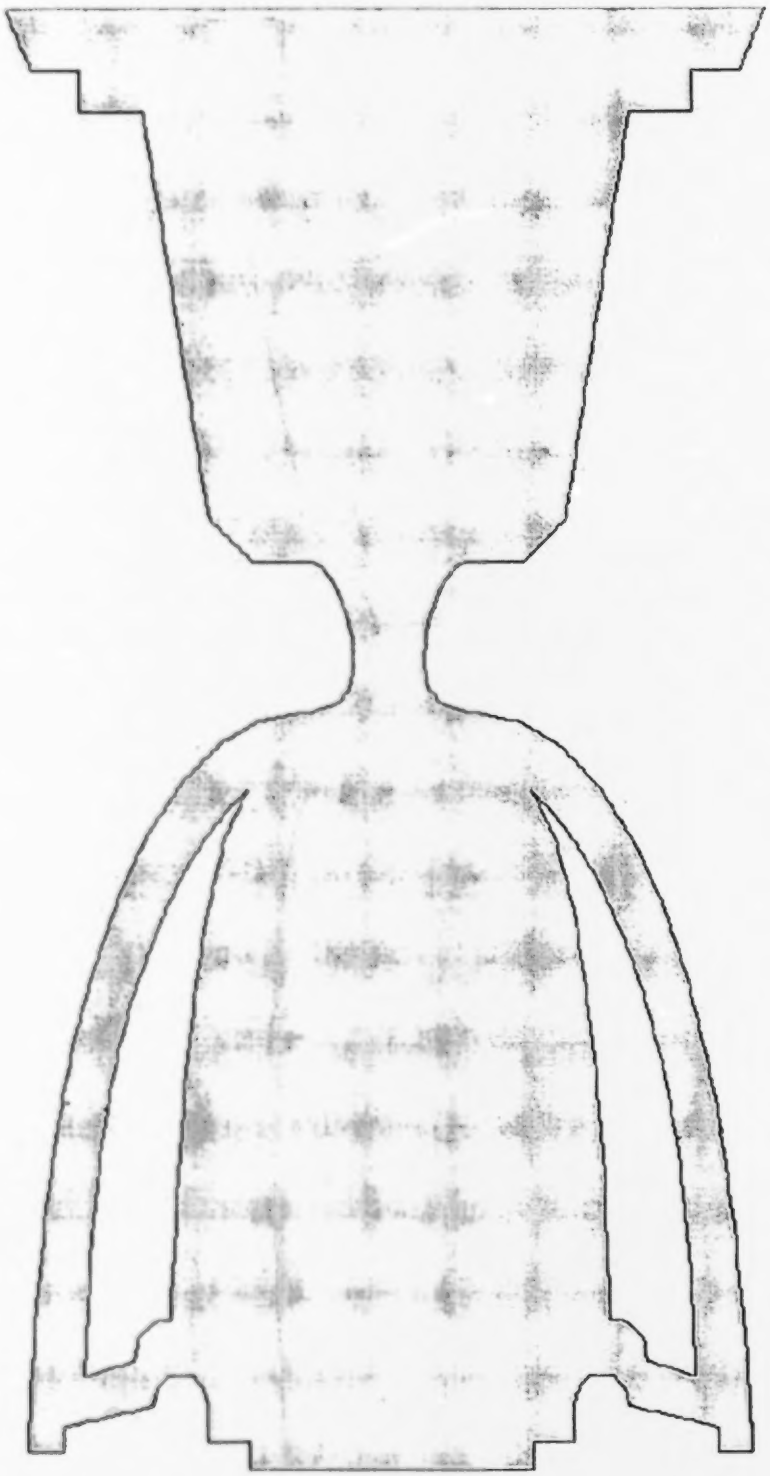

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